

# EUROPE 2023

4 months | 6 countries | 8 house swaps | 10 journey legs



## Christkindl

Christkindl has been mentioned many times by various people over the last couple of weeks. People waxed lyrical about the place so, given it was only a couple of kilometres away we decided to take a look today. Heather chased up a brochure at the Tourist Info Centre and we consulted Google before we ventured forth. Evidently Christkindl is famous for its pilgrimage church, its post office, for its Christmas time festivities including its mechanical nativity scenes and its museum and museum train. But what we were not prepared for was the dearth of info about WHEN these things were open to the public. I had ridden by Christkindl on my bike the other day and the carpark was not only extensive but it was full of cars!! It must be a pretty popular place.

Quite by chance we read that the church is only open for limited periods and TODAY was one of those days. But it was only opened from 9am to 11am!! So a reasonably early breakfast before we went to take a look.

The car park was full and so was the church! A mass was in progress and the choral singing gave me goosebumps but the rest of the place was quiet and everything was shut!! There is a hotel on the grounds and a restaurant with a great view but there was nothing else to see - no mechanical nativity scenes, no post office and no museum, or train! We walked the paths around the grounds which afforded some great views but Christkindl will have to wait another day. Not! BTW I found out later that the majority of the cars in the carpark are cars from the nearby secondary school!





Interesting to note that the Christkindl Post Office opened its doors in 1950 and since that date over 2 million letter and cards stamped with the special Christkindl post mark have been sent around the world each year before Christmas. Unfortunately there will be none from the Nowak's this year.

And the Christkindl Museum celebrates the history of local Christmas decorations over the centuries with 14,000 ornaments made from glass, porcelain, metal and cardboard/paper. There are also 200 dolls and doll's houses, tea dolls and doll toys from years gone by. Pity that a visiting (and interested) Australian couple will not be around to see this because the place opens on the 1st December and that includes the 58 square meters of nativity scenes with 300 carved figurines and unique mechanical system! Oh well!

The afternoon was given over to Heather going for a long walk into and around town while I again rode Christian's e-bike around the hills behind Steyr. I stopped often to chat to the cows and resident goats and realised how absolutely privileged I am to experience this beautiful this part of the country.

